



FIRST THINGS FIRST

The right system for bright futures

**Arizona Early Childhood Development and
Health Board**

**Regional Partnership Council Membership
Application Guide**

December 14, 2007

First Things First

Regional Partnership Council Membership Application Guide

I. Background

In November 2006, the voters of Arizona passed First Things First (FTF), a statewide ballot initiative that funds a voluntary system of early childhood development and health. With a dedicated annual funding stream generated from a tax on tobacco products, FTF aspires to improve the developmental and early learning outcomes for young children ages birth through five years. Arizona is presented with an unprecedented opportunity to create an early childhood system that affords our children an equal chance to reach their fullest potential, provide families with real choices about their children's educational and developmental experiences, and engage every community in sharing the responsibility as well as the benefits of safe, healthy and productive residents.

The governance model includes a State level Board and Regional Partnership Councils. The model combines consistent state infrastructure and oversight with strong local community involvement in the planning and delivery of services.

- FTF has responsibility for planning and implementing actions which will result in an improved system of early childhood development and health statewide. FTF members were appointed by Governor Janet Napolitano in December of 2006 and confirmed by the legislature during the 2007 legislative session.
- The Regional Partnership Councils (RPC) represent a voluntary governance body responsible for planning and implementing actions to improve early childhood development and health outcomes within a defined geographic area of the state (the region). Regional Partnership Councils must be appointed by April 2008.

First Things First established regional boundaries on November 27, 2007. When the board considered the regional partnership boundaries it was determined that Tribal Nations, as a whole, would be designated as part of a Region, rather than dividing a Tribal Nation among multiple regions. This was done in order to support planning across the Tribal population and alignment with each Tribe's planning and service delivery system. Each Tribal Nation is identified as part of one region. That is, where Tribal lands fall within more than one County, the region has been defined as inclusive of the entire Tribal Nation. To see a listing of the Regional Partnership Councils click [here](#).

The exceptions to this are the Navajo Nation and the Tohono O'odham Nation at Gila Bend. Coconino, Navajo and Apache Regional Partnership Councils include the portion of the Navajo Nation that is within each county boundary. The Tohono O'odham population living on Tribal lands in the Gila Bend area are included with the SW Maricopa Regional Partnership Council.

II. Regional Partnership Councils

Statutory Responsibilities

The Regional Partnership Councils have a variety of responsibilities under the law. Responsibilities defined in ARS Title 8, Chapter 13, Section 1161 are:

- A. Identify the assets available for early childhood development and health programs in its region, including opportunities for coordination and use of other available funding sources.

- B. Identify and prioritize the unmet need for early childhood development and health programs in its region.
- C. Submit a report detailing assets, coordination opportunities and unmet needs to the Board biannually. (The AzECDH Board shall have the discretion to approve or reject a Council's Assessment in whole or in part or to require revisions.)
- D. Annually develop a Regional Plan for the expenditure, during the next fiscal year, of funds budgeted by the Board pursuant to 8-1184 to meet the needs identified in its Region.
- E. Conduct the approved programs directly and/or make the approved grants pursuant to Section 8-1173.
- F. Increase parents' and providers' access to information about early childhood development and health programs.
- G. May solicit private funds from individuals, corporations and foundations to support its efforts to improve the quality of and access to early childhood development and health programs in its Region. The Board must approve any gifts received in response to Council solicitations.

Composition and Requirements

1. Each Regional Partnership Council shall be made up of eleven members who reside or work in the region. Required membership for Regional Partnership Councils is defined below. While examples are defined, individual applicants may qualify based on experience or a description not specifically included but that are consistent with the community norms.
 - Parent of a child five or younger at the time of their appointment to the Council - including guardians who are the primary care takers of a child five or younger.
 - Child care provider or preschool provider that is licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services, certified by the Arizona Department of Economic Security, authorized by a Tribal government or the U.S. Department of Defense or registered with Child Care Resource and Referral.
 - Health services provider – serving children birth to age 6 and may include but is not limited to physicians, nurses, county health department lay health workers, school nurses, dentists, dental hygienists, registered dietitians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, psychologists, other physical and mental health services paraprofessionals.
 - Public school administrator (for the purposes of this requirement, charter schools established pursuant to Title 15 are considered public schools) – also includes Tribal Community schools and Federal / BIA schools on tribal lands.
 - Early childhood educator – Individuals providing early childhood professional development instruction, including but not limited to community college and university level instructors or administrators and other professional development organizations.
 - Member of the business community – an owner, officer, CEO or member of the executive management staff of a for-profit or not-for-profit business.

- Member of the faith community – an individual with a voluntary or paid role within the faith community, a Traditionalist in a Tribal community, or other faith based representation consistent with the community norms and titles.
 - Member of a philanthropic organization - a member of the Board of Directors or executive management staff.
 - Tribal member representative – a public official or employee of a Tribal Government. In addition to the specific public official or employee of a Tribal Government representative. Tribal members may also participate in the Council in any of the other categories listed above.
 - At Large Representative – At Large membership is first available to Tribal representatives from each Tribal Nation located in the region. The balance of at large membership must be a community member (lives or works in the region) and may, but does not have to, represent any of the categories identified above.
2. Members must work or reside in the region for the RPC on which they serve.
 3. Members of the RPCs shall be appointed by the Board after a public application process. After the initial RPC members are appointed, any subsequent appointments to fill vacancies on the RPC will be made by the Board with the input of the RPC.
 4. Members of the RPCs shall serve four year terms, to begin and end July 1.
 - A. Initial terms of members for each RPC are:
 - Five terms beginning April 1, 2008 and ending July 1, 2010.
 - Six terms beginning April 1, 2008 and ending July 1, 2012.
 5. Tribal Nations that are included in a region (the Tribe has not selected to be their own region), shall have a representative on each RPC.
 6. A RPC with boundaries that include multiple Tribal Nations shall have a representative from each of the Tribal Nations included within the region's boundaries.
 7. Regional Partnership Council members may serve on only one RPC at a time.
 8. Regional Partnership Council members may be appointed to serve one additional consecutive term.
 9. Members of the RPC who miss more than three meetings without excuse or resign their membership shall be replaced by the Board after a public application process and with the input of the RPC.
 10. Regional Partnership Council members are not eligible to receive compensation. They are eligible for travel expenses and reimbursement for subsistence pursuant to Title 38, Chapter 4, Article 2. Reimbursement shall be paid from the administrative costs account of the Early Childhood Development and Health Fund established by Section 8-1181 on claims approved by the executive director.
 11. Members of the RPC are immune from personal liability with respect to all acts done and actions taken in good faith within the scope of their authority during duly constituted regular and special meetings with approval of a majority of the RPC.

III. Application and Selection Process

1. The application guide, job description and application for the RPCs are posted on the Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board web site, www.azecdh.gov . Applicants may download the application from the web site or may request that a copy be mailed by calling (602-771-5100). Applicants may submit the application 1) by completing it on line and submitting it electronically, 2) downloading the application or requesting a mailed copy and returning it via US Mail or 3) returning it via fax.
 - a. Go to www.azecdh.gov to apply online
 - b. Applications **mailed** shall be sent to:
Arizona Early Childhood Education and Health Board
Assistant Director Regional Councils
4000 N. Central, Suite 1480
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
 - c. Applications **submitted via fax** shall be faxed to: 602-274-7040
2. The initial application time period shall be no less than 45 days. **All applications are due by 5:00 pm on January 31, 2008. The deadline may be extended for a particular region or regions if a sufficient number of applications are not received. Regional Partnership Councils need six members to begin meeting. If a Tribal Nation opts out on or after January 15, 2008, the application period will be shortened in order for the screening and interview process and appointments by Board to be completed by April 1, 2008.**
3. Applicants may submit up to two applications, one for where they live and one for where they work. If an applicant is submitting an application based on where they are employed, it is for the Regional Partnership Council in which their office resides. If an applicant's work is conducted at multiple sites across multiple Regional Partnership Councils then the applicant must choose for which Council to submit an application.
4. **Only those Tribal Nations that have decided to establish their own RPC are listed on the application. Until a Tribe Nation makes a decision, the Tribal Nation is included in the RPC for which they were designated. As Tribal Nations make their decisions the application and related documents will be updated and the information posted on the AzECDH website, www.azecdh.gov (to view the regional boundaries and Tribal Nation designations click here)**
5. Applications must include a personal or work history resume/vitae from each applicant.
6. This is a public application process and applicant's names may be made available to the public at any time during the process.
7. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, First Things First will make reasonable accommodation(s) to persons wishing to serve as RPC members. Persons with a disability selected for interviews for RPC membership may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, by calling the First Things First offices at 602-771-5100. Requests should be made as early as feasible to allow sufficient lead-time to arrange the accommodation.
8. All applicants shall be notified of the results of the process.
9. Any questions regarding the application should be directed to (602) 771-5100. Please also refer to the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

Screening

1. FTF staff will review applications using the RPC application screening grid and select candidates for interviews. The approach to review and use of the screening grid includes:
 - a. Screening for required elements – Applicant lives or works in the Region, meets the requirement of at least one of the membership categories and/or is applying as a member at large and has submitted the requested references. Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements shall be notified in writing by the Regional Manager that their application did not meet minimum requirements and is no longer being considered.
 - b. Screening and rating for experience, skills and knowledge—FTF shall use a screening grid point process to score individual applications based on the knowledge, skills and experience identified in the job description.
2. The two individuals scoring highest in each membership category shall be prioritized for interviews.
3. The screening process will be complete within 30 days of closing the application process and the interviews will occur immediately thereafter.

Interviewing

1. Multiple interview panels of two FTF staff and one community representative, led by the Regional Managers, shall complete all interviews. The community representative shall not participate in a panel conducting interviews in the Region in which they live or work. The Regional Coordinator shall not participate in the interviews for their region. Interviews may be conducted by phone.
2. The interview responses shall be rated, using a point system based on the responsiveness to the interview question, by each person on the interview panel. Following each interview, panelists shall compare ratings and work to form a consensus rating for the interview.
3. Once interviews are complete and rated, each panel shall submit the screening results, interview results and recommendations for appointment to the Executive Director for review. The Executive Director may, following review of the applications and interview screening results, request additional recruitment and/or interviews be conducted.
4. The Executive Director shall submit recommendations to the Board by region. When recommendations are final for at least six of the 11 required members, they may be submitted to the Board.
5. A RPC may convene with six of the eleven membership appointments filled. When a RPC convenes with less than the full membership, the Council shall form a membership committee charged with recruiting and making recommendations through Executive Director to the Board for additional appointments using the process above.

IV. Council Member Appointment - Terms and Process

1. Initial terms of members for each RPC are:
 - a. Five terms beginning April 1, 2008 and ending July 1, 2010.
 - b. Six terms beginning April 1, 2008 and ending July 1, 2012.
2. Length of the initial terms shall be determined based on the expressed desires of the appointees. If appointees do not have a preference, the Executive Director may designate the two year terms,

beginning with positions held by the business representative, the faith community representative, the parent of a child age 5 or under, and the at large positions.

3. The Board shall consider recommendations and designate appointments.
4. Once the Board has approved an appointment, the Executive Director shall prepare and send a letter of appointment on behalf of the Board.
5. Appointees shall:
 - A. Sign a Letter of Commitment (Attachment C) acknowledging their commitment and their awareness of conflict of interest issues.
 - B. Complete a declaration of potential Conflict of Interest; i.e. identify any potential conflict of interest such as investment in, ownership of or employment with an organization that may benefit financially from decisions of the Council.
 - C. Complete the Arizona Department of Administration Volunteer Registration Form (Attachment D).

Conflict of Interest

Regional Partnership Council members shall adhere to the Board policy with regard to conflict of interest. RPC members shall, during RPC meetings verbally disclose their conflict and recuse themselves from participation in decision making in areas where they have a conflict of interest.

According to Board Policy:

Board members, RPC members and employees of the Board shall comply with the conflict of interest provisions of A.R.S. Title 38, Chapter 3, Article 8 – 1173 (c). These statutes set the minimum standards expected of public officers and employees who, in their official capacities, are faced with a decision or contract that might affect their pecuniary or proprietary interests or those of a relative. Section 38-503 provides in part:

- A. Any public officer or employee of a public agency who has, or whose relative has, a substantial interest in any contract, sale, purchase or service to such public agency shall make known that interest in the official records of such public agency and shall refrain from voting upon or otherwise participating in any manner as an officer or employee in such contract, sale or purchase.
- B. Any public officer or employee who has, or who's relative has, a substantial interest in any decision of a public agency shall make known such interest in the official records of such public agency and shall refrain from participating in any manner as an officer or employee in such decision.

Under this law, a Board member, RPC member or Board employee who has a conflict of interest must disclose the interest and refrain from participating in the matter. Board members, members of RPCs and Board employees may find guidance on this subject in the *Arizona Agency Handbook*, which is available on the Attorney General's website. http://www.azag.gov/Agency_Handbook/Agency_Handbook.html. Failure to comply with these provisions will be cause for removal of the member from the Council.

Council Member Resignations and Terminations

Members of the RPC who miss more than three meetings without excuse or resign their membership shall be replaced by the Board after a public application process and with the input of the RPC. ARS 8-1162(c)